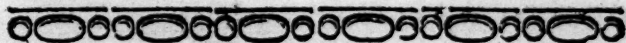




DID YOU EVER SEE SUCH
DAMN'D STUFF?

O R,

SO-MUCH-THE-BETTER.



THE
DID YOU EVER SEE SUCH
DAMN'D STUFF?



So much better

DID YOU EVER SEE SUCH
DAMNED STUFF?

O R,
SO-MUCH-
THE-BETTER.

A STORY
Without Head or Tail,
Wit or Humor.

Rantum-skantum is the Word,
And *Nonsense* shall ensue.

L O N D O N :

Printed for C. G. SEYFFERT in Pall-
mall. 1760.

DID YOU EVER SEE SUCH

DAMNED STUFF?

O R

SO MUCH -
THE BETTER.

A STORY

Without Head or Tail,

Wit or Humour.



And Nobody shall notice.

LONDON:

Printed for C. G. Stevenson in Pall Mall.

1850.



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O F
C H A P T E R S.



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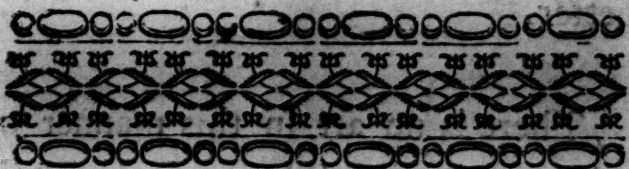
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CHAP. I.

Which promises more than it performs.



HE Prince *Toadstool* answered the idea of his name; the Prince *Discreet* was a charming fellow; the Princess *Tricolora* was more fair, more shining than a fine

day in spring: she detested *Toadstool*, adored *Discreet*, and was forced to marry *Toadstool*. So much the better.

There is no art in this manner of telling a story. The unravelment is given at the same time as the exposition: but no-one is the more for that in the secret of that same, *so much the better*; and this is what I am about to unfold, with all the pomp becoming the gravity of the subject.

Toadstool, though infernally ugly and a fool, was not for all that lawfully begot. His mother was so execrable, that no man had had the courage to take her for better or worse.

worse, but her money supplied the place of charms: she bought her gallants, and had just arithmetic enough to pay them according to the number of their jobs. *Toadstool* was the fruit of one of her laborers at that hard work.

He had a monstrously great head, and nothing in it: his legs were as short as his ideas, so that whether thinking or walking, he always lagged behind. But as he had heard that men of wit, though they do not say foolish things, often do them, he took it into his head to be a man of wit upon the plan of doing a foolish thing, and resolved to marry.

His lady-mother the fairy *Burn-*

ing-spite, mused a good while about
 what family she should prefer for this
 plague, and her choice landed at
 length on the Princess *Tricolora*,
 daughter of the Queen of *Patagonia*.
 This Queen heartily despised her
 husband, had no great fondness for
 her children, liked extremely the
 joys of love, without caring much
 for those who gave them her: she
 had more sensations than sentiments:
 she was one of the free and easy
 society. About a twelv-month after
 her marriage, she was brought to bed
 of a Prince. This birth occasioned
 a great debate in the council about
 his education: the King and Queen
 too differed about it, not without
 great bitterness on both sides: the
 child however being it is likely a
 good,

good-natured child, to keep peace, died quietly out of the way.

The Queen, who had a mind to renew the dispute, determined to have another boy. She talked to her friends upon it, the result of which private conversation was, that she grew big again, was transported with joy at it, and brought forth only a girl, to her infinite vexation. It was long deliberated what name to give this little Princess. The Queen had at that time no more than three gallants, of whom one had black hair, one fair, and the third chesnut. She gave her daughter the name of *Tricolora*; which proves what a high idea her majesty had of distributive justice. The King, who for reasons best

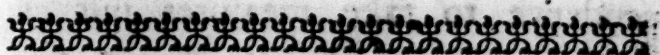
known to himself, to his royal comfort, and to perhaps not a few others, had no very paternal bowels for this nominal daughter, whom he was not the less forced to own, proposed her being brought up in a nunnery. The Queen flatly opposed this, and very good naturedly observed to him, that soft heads did not exclude hard hearts. She might have safely added, that they were ofteneft seen to go together, in contradiction to that most false and vulgar notion, that good nature implies weakness. "No," says the Queen, "I will have no child of mine learn what are the substitutes to the real thing, before she enjoys the real thing itself." The monarch made no answer, from his not understanding her. I fancy he was

was not the only one that did not know what she meant; but five or six courtiers were seen to titter, which might make it be believed that they had a quick apprehension. There are fools that have luck at laughing, though they laugh upon trust, chance favors their nicking a just cause for it, as if they had common sense.

Tricolora was bred at court, where she had the happiness of pleasing, because no-one taught her the art of it. Her education had been neglected, so that no trouble had been taken to spoil her natural graces, and nature being thus left to herself, the Princess was simplicity itself in the good sense of that word, had no airs, and did not

think herself amiable, though she wished to be so. The women thought her rather silly, the men imagined they observed a due aptness in her, and the Queen, who began to be jealous of an eclipse by her, concluded it high time to marry her out of the way, into some foreign country. Her laudable design was notified at several courts, and we shall see what followed upon it.





C H A P. II.

A new form of interviews.

THE Queen received a number of ambassadors on account of the Princesses marriage. Yet her figure, her character were intirely out of the question : there was no desire shown either to see her or know her : but there was a special inquiry made into the extent of her revenues : no one asked for her picture ; but the account of her fortune was taken with great exactness.

The

The Queen, on her side, had the prudence to take measures just as sensible for the happiness of her daughter. She was much tempted to give her to the son of the King of *Tonquin*, because his ambassador was very handsome and well made. She was on the brink of this determination, when the Prince *Discreet* sent to beg the favor of an audience. The Queen, always full of dignity, gave her cheeks a lick of red, placed her patches, undressed into a dishabill, and lay upon the loll on a little canopied bed.

The Prince is now admitted.
 "Great Queen, said he, bowing low to the ground, I am afraid of falling into any breach of respect to
 your

your Majesty. — That would be pleasant indeed, said the Queen, any but myself would be offended at this introduction; but for my part I do not find it in the least disagreeable. On the contrary, it gives me hopes of you. — Madam, pursued the Prince, I have a request to make of you, and it is to yourself I apply, and not to the King. I am son to the Fairy *Sly*. — “ You take after your mother by what I can observe, said the Queen; besides, you really have an air of making vigorous impressions: you have fine large black eyes: I would lay any wager you are not capable of a *rude* proceeding. Certainly not, answered the Prince, no-one loves more than I to do *civil* things by the
the

the ladies. Ah! Madam, continued he sighing, how amiable is that *Tricolora*! Well-enough for a child, said the Queen, but she has no idea of any thing beyond her doll: I do not know how it is; but if I was a man, I should, methinks, prefer your rare mellow fruit to a bite of a green apple that sets one's teeth an edge. I should never endure your raw girls: and yet they are all the taste: but taste is every day growing more depraved: there is no such thing as morals now a days. — It is not a sign of its being so with me, said the Prince, since my views on the Princess
 . . Views! interrupted peevishly the Queen, views upon my daughter! — you begin to fail in your respect
 to

to me. — That would be greatly against my intention, answered *Discreet*: I mean only to prove to your Majesty That you are very little acquainted with the world, said the Queen smartly: I see you want, in the old humdrum way, to become the husband of *Tricolora*: indeed, Prince, you do not do yourself justice: you deserve much better than all that comes to. At that instant, the Queen made a motion that discovered a leg, and a very pretty one it was: the Prince was young; he was susceptible of warm impressions: the Queen perceived it, and thus went on with what she was saying.

I cannot think such an one as you
driven

driven to marry for want of game.—
 The Prince was keeping his eye fix'd
 on that same leg. Indeed, madam,
 pursued he, the more I examine you,
 the more I think her royal highness
 your daughter like you. —Why, ay!
 there may be something in that, said
 the Queen, and you are then abso-
 lutely bent upon marrying her? —
 I own, said the Prince, that the sole
 object of my ambition is that. The
 Queen took pretext from the heat of
 the weather, to lay her neck rather
 bare. Well then, said she, if it is
 so, there must be an interview. Ma-
 dam, answered the Prince, I have the
 honor to be known to the Princess;
 I sometimes pay my court to her, and
 I think I may flatter myself that she
 will not be displeased at the step I
 am

am taking; so that an interview seems intirely unnecessary. What a novice you are, said the Queen! I am sure you never see my daughter but when she holds a circle at her court: the conversation can only turn at such time upon general vague subjects: there is no possibility then of your studying or knowing one another: you should for that be together alone.

The Prince, transported with joy, approved no doubt this conclusion, and said, with rapture; yes, Madam, I do conceive it may be necessary there should be an interview. Why, said the Queen, looking earnestly at the Prince, the interview is now on foot. He seemed surprized, and look-
ed

ed round him to see if *Tricolora* was any where by. — My daughter, said the Queen, has a thorough confidence in me : I am her other self : it is I who represent her ; she will accept you, if you suit me : on this occasion you are to consider me as being my daughter : I stand for her, and all that I am afraid of, continued she, with an air of modesty, is that my daughter may not be to your liking.

The Prince apprehended the Queen's designs upon him : he saw he should not obtain *Tricolora* but on those conditions ; the Queen was as yet no undesirable piece. He determined himself, and said gallantly ; this form, Madam, of an interview adds

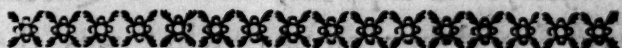
to my happiness. With these words, he squeezed her majesty's hand, who very faithfully returned him the squeeze, while these words slipped from her: Prince, indeed, I believe you will do for my daughter. I am very certain, continued he briskly, that my happiness depends upon her. She is satisfied with the interview, replied the Queen.

At this *Discreet* imagined he should be let off without further ceremony. — May I then, said he, breathing a-fresh again, flatter myself that this marriage will be concluded? Yes, doubtless, pursued the Queen, you seem made for one another; but you know as well as I, that those of our rank begin with marrying by proxy: it is I who am charged on this occasion,

C

with

with my daughter's powers: I am to represent her. *Discreet* could not mistake the drift of this discourse. He was fairly embarked, and must have renounced all hopes of his favorite port, if he had but demurred to the touching at this one in his way. He became then inconstant from a principle of constancy, and from sentiment yielded to a cessation of sentiment. Talking was now out of the question: action took place of it; pleasure was at once felt on one side, and counterfeited on the other. The Queen came to her speech again only in monosyllables; and at length, she pronounced as clearly as her short breathing and sighs would give her leave of utterance, *Ab! Ab! Prince!* — dear Prince! — *marry, do, marry my daughter again!—and again!*



C H A P. III.

All unexpected.

THE Queen went to *Tricolora's* apartment, handed by the Prince. Well! daughter, said she, own that you have had a great deal of pleasure. *Tricolora* blushed; the Prince was out of countenance, the Queen surprized. I see, said the Princess, that the Prince is not so discreet as he should be, and that he has told you all. The Prince recovering himself, confessed there had somewhat indeed passed between the Princess and him, but nothing of consequence enough to alarm her

Majesty. I suppose, said the Queen;
 you found her alone: what was the
 maid of honor in waiting a-doing?
 It is odds, replied the Prince, but
 that she was doing what your maids
 of honor do very often, as I imagine
 at least. I absolutely, said the Queen,
 will have the whole history of this
 adventure. The history, said *Discreet*
 sighing, will be but too short an one.
 I had the happiness of finding the
 Princess one evening delivered up to
 herself: she was reading a new ro-
 mance: I was afraid she would be
 disgusted of love, by seeing it so fri-
 gidly treated: for a counter-poison
 I attempted a dissertation on senti-
 ments; she seemed to lend me her
 whole attention. In the hopes of
 warming her in my favor, I tried to
 conquer my timidity; I laid before
 her

her the state of my heart: I perceived she wanted to interrupt me, but her natural politeness, in which she doubtless takes after you, Madam, prevailed for her hearing me out. I had the boldness to kiss her hand: she suffered it, foreseeing that I should stop there, and not incur her resentment for hazarding more.

How, said the Queen, did you go no greater lengths? No, Madam, answered *Discreet*. As the Princess does not know so much of life as your Majesty, she did not understand so well doing the honors of her apartment. That being the case, said the Queen, the marriage shall take place. In consequence of which she gave the necessary orders, bethought herself of the preparations, bespoke the wedding-

ding-cloths, coaches, and so forth, and ordered feast-tickets to be printed. The King was surprized at the news: and yet he had seen it in all the papers, but had not believed a syllable of the matter. He sent for the Princess and Queen, and asked if they took him for one of the four kings at cards. No, said the Queen, for they often make me a good game. Besides you know in your own conscience that you have no right over the Princess. The marriage shall proceed, I have consulted the *fathers*. And I say, that it shall not proceed, (said the Fairy *Burning-spite*, who that moment appeared in a solo-chaise, if so it may be called, when it was forced to hold two, the Fairy and her son *Toad-stool*, who made a shift to sit on a stool at her feet) I insist
on

on the Princesses marrying my pretty Youth there.

We shall have a trial of skill for that, said the Fairy *Sly*, who had arrived in a phaeton drawn by six flying foxes. — Let us, said the Queen to her then, unite our interests; I depend on your protection. I grant it you, said the Fairy *Sly*, and I will give you a shining proof of it. That instant she put the Queen close to the wall, touched her with her wand, and the Queen of Patagonia became a figure in tapestry, or what might be called with much more propriety than as it is used in the painter's jargon, a fine piece of still life. *Tricolora* gave a skream, the Fairy *Burningspite* made a wry face, the Prince *Tond-stool* burst out a laughing, the

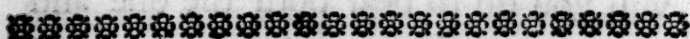
Prince *Discreet* asked what this was for, and the King of Patagonia returned thanks.

What a glorious thing are these metamorphoses in a fairy tale? If they do not make a reader stare, they at least set him a yawning. This however one of the Queen's, was a master-stroke of policy. I do not know indeed how that was ever made out, but the increased ruefulness of the Fairy *Burning spite's* face, plainly evinced it to be so; the Fairy *Shy* was triumphant: and yet she is not always to be so. What various and opposite adventures will not the clash of these two Fairy-powers produce! O my son, cried the Fairy *Shy*, what pleasures, but what pains, what good luck, but what mis-chances too, do I
fore-

foresee are prepared for you ! How will you do to bear both the one and the other ? Come, let us go and take advice of the Inquisitor General.



CHAP.



C H A P. IV.

In which there is not much.

THE Inquisitor-General, had for some time lived with a Fairy, who did not make him pay for his lodging in money, and yet did not let him live rent-free. This Fairy was a little woman, rather ancient, had a right quality-paleness, which some ladies affect, though one would think it rather qualified them for candidates for an hospital, than for the honor of pleasing the men. She concealed the passions she had, and made a parade of tastes that she had not. Her tastes were in truth not her own,

own, she took them, as so many thousands do besides, upon trust from others. Plays diverted her more than operas, and instead of going to both, she never went but to operas, for which she had neither relish nor judgment. She would, in her own sense of things, have preferred the noble neatness of a plain English dress; but because it was the fashion, she must be florigigged and flounced out in a way that gives you an idea of a beggar-woman fluttering her rags. Her health, and even her own natural taste strongly recommended to her the plain wholesome traditional dishes of the old cookery, to which however she preferred all the poisonous refinements of the modern. All this compliance with all the nonsense of fashion, made her pass for a woman
of

of high taste, so that she was generally admired and constantly miserable. In short, she was a Fairy cut out for courts. A person was no-body till he had been presented to her. She imagined that was the only motive that had engaged the Fairy *Sly* to bring the Prince *Discreet* to her. She liked his figure, and as the wit of few courtiers is not but low enough to pun, she told him his figure was more fashionable than his name. Soon the conversation turned all upon common-places, those fast friends that never fail you at a pinch for something to say. After which the story of the day came into turn. The Fairy *Sly* mentioned the Queen's being transformed into a figure in tapestry. The little old woman immediately cried out, "*So much the better.*"

ter." Madam, said the Prince, I own to you that I have not penetration enough to discover the propriety of that same, *so much the better*, on this occasion. — I am passionately in love with *Tricolora*. So much the better, said the Fairy again. I am afraid, replied *Discreet*, that it is rather so much the worse. The Queen approves my suit, but now she is no longer in a condition to give her consent. So much the better still, said the Fairy. I do not understand you, said the Prince, my father-in-law that should be, is a mighty good sort of a man but weak, very weak, the Fairy *Burning-spite* will obtain from him the Princess for her son *Toad-stool*. — "So much the better, cried out the Fairy, raising her voice, so much the better, my dear child :

at

“ at your age, the passions are vio-
 “ lent, but the execution does not
 “ answer. It was given to no body
 “ but the Inquisitor-General to be so
 “ much of a man as he is, when he
 “ was as yet only at boy’s age. Oh!
 “ he was and is a pretious privileged
 “ mortal. I say it that know it. He
 “ makes the most of every thing.
 “ He contemplates his glory in the
 “ past, his pleasure in the present,
 “ and his happiness in the future.
 “ Nothing afflicts, nothing discou-
 “ rages him. He affords consolation
 “ to all that apply to him. The
 “ King would, on his account, have
 “ erected for him a new office of
 “ state under the title of Lord High-
 “ Comforter, but there were so many
 “ old women about the court, that he
 “ modestly declined it. But he could
 “ not

“ not well miss the title of *So much*
“ *the better*. — I will go and fetch
“ him for you, I am sure he will
“ administer comfort to you.”

Madam, said the Prince *Discreet* to
his Mother, as soon as they were left
alone, do you know that same Mr.
So much-the-better ? — “ Yes, son,
“ replied the Fairy : he is a holy per-
“ sonage who does a world of good :
“ he has the secret of pleasing every-
“ body, by always seeing things on
“ their flattering side.

“ If he sees a woman who is no
“ longer young, he immediately says,
“ so much the better : if asked his
“ reason he adds, there is more of so
“ much the better in women of a
“ certain age than is commonly ima-
“ gined :

“ gined : ease, convenience, and espe-
“ cially their entering into the spirit
“ of the thing better, when their
“ heads have done with being too
“ much taken up with pink and
“ silver to mind any thing else.

“ If he sees a mere raw girl, but
“ breathing the sweets of innocence
“ and simplicity, so natural to that
“ age, he does not the less say,
“ so much the better, and I fancy,
“ my son, I need not mention his
“ reasons for that too.

“ If he is told that a woman loves
“ her husband to distraction : so
“ much the better, says he directly :
“ a woman capable of loving such a
“ thing as a husband, must have a
“ warm constitution : this woman,
“ one

“ one of these days, will belong to the
 “ community. Yes, yes, she will be
 “ one of us : she is made for circu-
 “ lation in trade.”

“ If on the other hand, he hears
 “ of a husband being detested by his
 “ wife, ah, says the holy man, lic-
 “ kerishly goggling his eyes, so
 “ much the better : this is a proof
 “ of the lady’s social turn : I dare
 “ swear she has good natural parts
 “

You seem, said the Prince, not un-
 acquainted with his. Discretion hin-
 dered him from proceeding, and that
 instant the little Fairy returned, ac-
 companied with the Inquisitor-Gen-
 eral.



CHAP. V.

*In which the Prince does not know what
to think.*

THE Inquisitor-General was a Man of five-foot six inches, stout made, legs muscular, rather too much tho' in the chairman-stile : better however than in that of a modern beau : broad shoulders well covered with flesh, teeth passing white, piercing eyes, and a hopeful nose. I do not know whether he had a great deal of wit, but if those bodily qualities do not imply it, they may be allowed sometimes to compensate the want of it.

As

As he had been acquainted that the Fairy *Sly* was come to consult him, he put on his cunning fortune-teller's face: saluted her with an air of gravity, and looked on the Prince as a little master come on a visit with his mama.

Sir, said she respectfully, your reputation is so extensive, that I am come to ask your advice: you know, I suppose, my kindness for the Queen. I do, said he coolly, I know all: your son's happiness is your only object. He is deeply in love; that is matter in course: he wants to be married, which is foolish enough: but he would have his wife vertuous, can any thing be pleasanter? — What, she will then not be so? answered the Prince hastily. — You

or I will take care she shall not, replied the Inquisitor. You want to be married and not be a—— you understand me, — why that would be, the being an original without a copy. Your Lady-mother, who was too good a wife not to preserve her husband from such a ridicule, has in pity of the silliness of your prejudices, provided against them in the metamorphosis of the Queen. — I absolutely do not understand you, said the Prince in a tone of impatience; what you say is utterly incomprehensible. I thought as much, said the little Fairy: let the Inquisitor-General alone for being understood; he has too much wit for that.

But to return, said the Prince to the enchantment of the Queen. Softly,

ly, answered the Inquisitor-General, that is no concern of yours: it is not you that are to break it, it is I. — And how that? replied the Prince. And how that? said the Inquisitor, rehearsing upon him with an air of irony,—how that?—you know how you managed the scene of the *interview* with *Tricolora* by proxy at the Queen's. The Prince blushed, the two Fairies laughed, and the Inquisitor went on: you are pretty sensible in what manner that interview passed: are not you? come, own the truth with a good grace.—Well then! said the Prince, doubtless, I know how it passed; but what does that prove? — It proves, said the Inquisitor very gravely, that if you shine in interviews, I do not less shine in breaking enchantments. E-

very one has his peculiar excellence :
 I say no more. — Well, (said the
 Prince, who did not understand him,
 nor will the reader till by and by,
 and in the mean time he is desired to
 have patience) I allow this, but pray
 rid me of a cruel doubt, which, of
Toadstool or me, will be the happy
 man to possess the Princess ? — You
 shall know that as clearly as possible
 for me to tell you, said the Inquisitor.
 He then took three turns round the
 room, chalked out three times three
 half-moons, which if my arithmetic
 does not fail me, makes just nine,
 yawned three times towards whence
 the moonshine came and caught three
 mouthfulls of it, fell into three fits of
 laughing, cut three faces and three
 capers ; after all which awful cere-
 monies, he pronounced the following
 infallible oracle.

The

The Prince Discreet will have the Princess Tricolora, and he will not have her ; so much the better for her. The Prince Toadstool will have the Princess Tricolora, and will not have her ; so much the better for her, and for me.

O the clever man ! said the Fairy *Sly*. O the great man ! said the little old woman. O the blockhead ! said the Prince *Discreet*.

The Inquisitor, always polite, tho' a man of so much consequence, made a bow to the Fairy *Sly*, gave his hand to the little old woman, took leave of the Prince, with these words : " I leave you to think of what I have told you so clearly : so good-night to your most serene highness !



CHAP. VI.

All Nonsense : so much the better.

THE Prince remained and looked devilishly foolish : he is not however the only smart to whom that may have happened. Even his lady-mother was perplexed ; not so the Inquisitor-General, who was far from being in that case. The Fairy *Burning-spite* was waiting for him in his closet with the Princess *Tricolora*. They were come there handed by the King of *Patagonia*, and the pretty *Toadstool*. But after all, they might have been better squired.

The

The Queen had no sooner been metamorphos'd into a tapestry-figure, as the gentle reader may, if he thinks it worth his while, remember, than the King imagined himself capable of governing, because there was nobody now left to govern him, for the devil might have taken all his ministers and not have left a statesman the less in the land. Upon this plan then of governing by his own head, he opposed the Fairy *Burning-spite*, insisted on the marriage of *Tricolora* with the Prince *Discreet*, and pleaded for this the will of the Queen. If that is all, said the Fairy, I can soon quiet this small scruple. Remember the decree of Fate that declared the Queen to have no right of marrying any children of hers but those of which you should be the father.—

Slife,

Slife! said the King, that is true I did not think of that, and I hate disputing; but in that case, your son may possibly come to resemble me.——*Toadstool*, who happened just then to have something of manners about him, answered politely, you think then that all the world is as lazy as yourself. I take upon me to be the father of my own children, but I want for all that to know whether any-one besides will hunt upon my grounds, and 'tis upon that we must consult the Inquisitor general.

From so far as he could see the Inquisitor now coming towards him, he called out, Divine Oracle, I want to be married to this lady.——And that is what I do not want, continued *Tricolora*.——Very well! said the

the Inquisitor-general, you are both of you in the right.

We are come, said the Fairy *Burning-spite*, to ask you what will come of all this ? — Many things answered the polite wizzard. In the first place I am to tell you, that the husband and the lover of the Princess will be two. — Phoooh ! said the Fairy, that is so common, there needs no conjuring to tell me that. — Why then did you ask me ? said the Inquisitor, however, hear me out futurity discloses itself to my eyes . . .

The Prince Discreet will have the first of the Princess ; so much the better for her. The Prince Discreet will not have the first of the Princess ; so much the better for me.

You

You have not common-sense, said *Tricolora* in a hurry: this oracle is flatly contradictory to itself in the two main points. It is not the less a true one, replied the Lord-conjurer. — I may then expect, said *Toad-stool*, that if I marry this lady, I shall not have the handsel of her. That requires explanation, said the Inquisitor. She will bring you her virgin-flower (though you will not gather it) but not before she will have had seventeen children.

A mighty good kind of a man that, said *Tricolora* of the Inquisitor, only, it is a pity, he is not safe in a cell at Bedlam. Do not laugh at this, said the King, it is the stile of the thing, for my part I have always a great veneration for what I do not understand. The

The Inquisitor General, resuming his prophetic enthusiasm, went on. I see, said he, other events that will make you tremble, and yet they are of the so much the better kind. *Tricolora*, far from being intimidated, was inheartened by these words: she flattered herself that the Prince *Discreet* being happy with her, would be one event in the number of the so much the better ones. His Grace the arch-conjurer conjectured this from the smirk on her countenance, and pronounced these terrible words.

“ Princess! I know your thoughts,
 “ but you deceive yourself. You
 “ will be the death of your lover,
 “ but it will be so much the bet-
 “ ter for him.

O my stars! cried out. *Tricolora*;
can this ever be?

For that matter, said *Toadstool*,
this same Princess must be a lovely
character: kill her lover! s'death,
only think of what her husband must
expect.

Her husband, said the Inquisitor,
will get off with no more than a
cholic.

Nay, if that is all, said *Toadstool*,
I will e'en venture and marry her.
My wife she shall be, and that right
soon. Come Princess make no faces,
but give me your hand this moment.

O Fairy *Sly*! pursued the Princess,
crying out with all her might, Fairy
I *Sly*!

Sly! will you suffer this? help me, or I shall be ravished into matrimony before I can help myself.

The Fairy *Sly* had stood all the while cunningly listening at the door, with her son *Discreet*, she appeared that moment, muttered a few words, and just touching the face of *Tricolora*, that Princess became one of the prettiest plumpest partridges you can imagine.

So much the better, said the Inquisitor-General at this: and so much the worse, cries the heartily disgusted reader. No! curse it, this stuff can never pass, a Princess changed into a partridge! that is too much. Have patience, gentle reader, do not pronounce sentence before you have heard reason. “Reason for what?” can any
reason

reason make such a transformation as that go down? I do not know that. But I have three pleas, First that of truth; secondly, that of example; thirdly, that of its being so much the better for the public even if it were nonsense. Ay! and what is more, I will not go on in my story, till I have made good these divisions of my apology; but then, if the reader is not curious enough to peruse them, why, e'en let him do as I would do in his place, — skip them.

First, as to truth: that this transformation cannot but be an historical fact, must be allowed from this plain consideration, that certainly no author would rack his invention to produce nothing better than so confoundedly foolish a lie. Its incredibility therefore stands its best voucher.

At least it has been allowed so in more serious matters than this.

Secondly, As to example: this is clearly of our side. Why may not a whimsical Fairy be believed capable of operating such a metamorphosis, when a post has been known, in the twinkling of an eye, to change a pillar of the state into a weathercock, and an orator into a turn-stile?

Thirdly, As to its being so much the better for the Publick if it were nonsense; thus I make it out. I conceive that every thing has its bounds. The appetite in vogue for trash and nonsense may at length be satiated. The sooner that event takes place the better. Every thing then that contributes to such a glut as

may hasten that event, is virtually useful. As real wit and good sense, those true native plants of the British soil, have long been in a manner choaked by false sentiment and fantastic invention, those exotic imported weeds of the French growth, cultivated here with such silly success, who knows but by dint of being crammed with them, the powers of intellectual digestion may at length protest against them, and a truer taste resume its sway? A time may come when thinking will not be out of fashion: when writings that might be of real service to the public, shall be no longer condemned to accommodate chandlers and trunk-makers, or what may be worse yet, in heaps of waste paper, to reproach and punish the poor bookseller for having

had a better opinion of the Age than it deserves; while such trash in the French haut-gout, as I am now serving you with, will most probably consume numerous editions. A propos! upon having how many readers of this present curious performance, do you imagine, I depend? Only eight hundred and forty seven thousand five hundred and fifty three. I will not bate one. I mean for the first three months after publication.

But how have I been carried away by the rage of justifying myself? not considering that I have left the fair Princess *Tricolora*, now a hen-partridge, alone, without a mate. But wait she did not long, for the Fairy *Sly* presently touched with her little finger the Prince *Discreet*, who, as

you may easily imagine, became a cock-partridge, full of love and lustihood. So much the better, cried the Inquisitor General. And so from her soul thought *Tricolora* : so did the Prince *Discreet*, in the remembrance of the good old proverb, of birds of a feather, &c.

But their joy was of short duration. For the Fairy *Burning-spite* laid hold of *Tricolora*, saying, gently, gently, my pretty one : you must be put into a cage, and amorous as you are, you will make an admirable decoy. You will call : Master *Discreet* will not fail of listening to it and coming to you : my pretty youth *Toadstool* shall hide himself ; that is what he is the best at ; I will give him a good fowling-piece, he shall
kill

kill his rival the cock-partridge, and then I will see that the marriage is consummated. The King of *Patagonia*, who remembered that the oracle had foretold her being the death of her lover, could not help giving vent to a sigh, and saying, ah, poor Prince ! your business is done. —Ay, and so shall the Princesses too ; said the Inquisitor-General, and yet it shall be only so much the better for her.





C H A P. VII.

Worse and worse. Is that possible?

THE Prince *Discreet*, now a cock-partridge, became less tender and more ardent, less delicate and more essential: by such a change, the women are less honored and more pleased. The Princess *Tricolora* felt, in a manner that left her no room for doubt, that she should not be cruel. The Prince *Toadstool* had his fowling-piece brought him, and the Fairy *Burning-spite* ordered a great hole to be dug for him to lie perdue in it. The reader here may prepare for great and interesting events. The
sun

sun began to draw near the western horizon, and the calm of the evening tranquillizing the inhabitants of the plains, invite them to make the best use of their health. *Toadstool* is now, according to order, snug in his hole : the cage was placed at the distance of ten steps from him, and the Fairy *Burning-spice* kept out of sight. *Tricolora*, who knew how the game went upon such occasions, resolved within herself not to give the least call : but alas ! she was then but a partridge, and as such, subject to the laws of natural instinct ; and, in truth, even among some women who presume much upon their virtue, it is not always that reason can boast the honor of subduing it.

Tricolora then, in whom, in spite

of all her resolution, a desire of her mate irresistibly operated, could not keep in her call. *Discreet*, who was in his partridge-form, within hearing, came nearer, bristled up his feathers, strutted, bridled, went round the cage, perched a-top of it, came down again, stood fronting the hen-partridge, got his head through the wires, presented his bill to her, and made the love-chirp.

Toadstool, enraged with jealousy took aim at him, and drew the trigger : but such a sportsman, such a piece ! that of *Toadstool* gave a *snap* ; but not even a flash in the pan : he hastened to repair the failure, but *snap* went the lock again, and always *snap*. Ah ! curse the lock ! cried he, foaming with madness. While he was losing
 hi

his time, the cock did not lose his : he managed so well, that at length, with pecking, he got the door of the cage open, and himself in, when, his dear mate squatting to him, as hens on those occasions do, he became, under his rival's nose, the happiest of all cocks. *Toadstool* could not get out of his hole ; his belly was too big ; his legs too short. He began to bawl out with all his might, — Mamma ! — Mamma ! I say, do not you hear ? come quick, quick, and stop such vile proceedings. The Fairy *Burning-spite* rushed upon the happy pair, and was just laying her hands on the Prince *Discreet*, whose neck she would probably have twisted round, when the Fairy *Sly*, who had been present all the while, tho' invisible, instantaneously rendered her
son

son as invisible as herself. The Fairy *Burning-spice* hunted about for him all in vain. Madam, said *Toad-stool*, it must be owned that Princess there has not much to brag of her modesty. I should punish her for what she has done, said the Fairy, but that we must respect her offspring. She was brought back to the palace, where she laid seventeen eggs, not one of them unimpregnated. Thus *Tricolora* had seventeen little ones by the first venter, without having lost her virginity in form of Princess. By this means one of the Inquisitor-General's oracles was verified. As soon as this little royal family were full-fledged, they had their inheritance of the open air given them, and thence sprung the race of red partridges, that to this day

day make so great a figure in a Perigord-pie.

The Fairy *Sly* had restored to the mother her natural form, who transported with joy, expressed in the warmest terms her deep sense of the obligation. But, in the name of all that is tender, said she, what is become of your son? The Fairy *Sly*, at this question, put on a tragedy-look, kept silence for a whole half-minute, and at length answered in a mournful tone, you will have news of him but too soon: the Inquisitor-General is never out. You cannot be off being the death of your lover, and the very night that he dies, the fates have decreed, that you must be forced to marry *Toad-pool*. *Tricolora* was about to whimper,

per, but the Fairy *Sly*, who judged that that would not be highly entertaining, left her by herself, and so doing, did very wisely. I shall imitate her, that I may not be obliged to give any account of the private reflexions of this dolefully distressed Princess. What one says to one self is not always good to be told others.



CHAP.



C H A P. VIII.

The Inquisitor-General in a terrible taking.

WE shall only observe that *Tri-lora*, after having much mused upon the means to avoid her misfortunes, determined to shun any place in which she might expect to meet the Prince *Discreet*; for, said she to herself, if I do not meet with him, it will be hard indeed if I kill him. By this one may see how terrible strong her royal highness was in logical conclusions.

The next day, which had proved a very sultry one, towards the evening,

ing, *Tricolora* could not resist the temptation of taking a little fresh air. Away she tripped unattended, the better to indulge her tender melancholy, to a pleasing grove, where after a little walking, she sat down under the shade of a spreading oak, when a heaviness stealing on her senses, she yawned, stretched, shut her eyes and dropped asleep.

Here, it may be expected, that the Prince *Discreet* will be introduced. But, no! patience; all in good time. For now it must be the Inquisitor-General, which will be full as well. Chance had brought him to that retired spot, as he was meditating a discourse he was to compose upon the inconveniencies of chastity, to be held forth before a female assembly,
that

that in some measure answered the idea of those Covent-Garden nuns, who make and religiously keep their vows of incontinency. But what a charming text did he find, when he discovered *Tricolora* fast asleep! I do not know precisely what the attitude of the Princess was, but the enraptured seer cried out,—"By the beard of Venus, I never saw any thing so pretty."—He concealed himself then behind a bush; was afraid of making the least noise, and yet could not help stamping with his foot, like one beside himself. He was ready to shudder: but his transport redoubled at hearing the Princess, in her sleep, vent a deep sigh, that seemed rather drawn from her by pleasure than by pain. The ah! ah! was accompanied with a gentle motion.—The

poor

poor Inquisitor grew as red as fire. But all the faculties of his soul were ingrossed, on seeing *Tricolera* half open her eyes, while she pronounced the following words in a melting-soft accent. " Ah ! how it tickles me ! " — She seemed to fall fast asleep again, but the minute after, she waked out-right, and cried out, Ah ! how warm it feels ! Thinking herself quite alone, she looked, and found a glow-worm hid in the grass, but posted the most advantageously that can be imagined.

A reader of any penetration will easily judge by the manner in which this glow-worm had placed itself, that it could be no other than the Prince *Discreet* thus metamorphosed by his mother. Besides, this is no very violent

lent transformation of a Prince into a glow-worm, when you may every day see courts swarm with viler vermin, earth-worms, grubs, caterpillars, and other reptiles or animalcules of the like nature.

The Princess however took it in her hand, and considered it with an air of complacency and satisfaction, as if she had had some doubt about what it was.—“ So then, “ said she, was it this that stirred me “ so ? how comical it is ! But hold, “ let me see if it has not stung me.” — Just at that critical instant the Inquisitor-General burst into tears of pleasure, and could not refrain crying out, “ Oh, I cannot bear it.”

Poor *Tricolora* was at once con-
founded

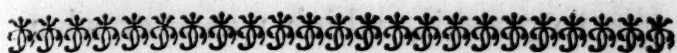
founded with fear and shame. Bless
 me! said she, Sir, what was you
 doing there? — The Inquisitor-Gener-
 al instead of answering her, answered
 only to his own thoughts. What
 were they? His answer will tell. —
 Ah! said he, sighing, how happy was
 that glow-worm! — A glow-worm,
 do you call it? said the Princess. —
 Yes, said the Inquisitor-General, and
 I admire the wisdom of nature, for
 placing that spark of fire which gives
 it the glow, just in its tail. Indeed!
 said *Tricolora*, I think that is odd
 enough: but, what do you conclude
 from thence? — That this luminous
 insect, replied the arch-conjurer, con-
 ceals from me perhaps a lover. At
 this word lover, the blood of *Trico-*
lora thrilled in her veins: she fell
 into a profound reverie, eyed wist-
 fully

fully the glow-worm, and pronounced these words with a moving air: "Poor little creature! how pretty it is!" — But do you know, added she upon reflexion on the place where she had found it, that you may, after all, be in the right, and that this may be a lover?

You need not doubt it, said the Inquisitor: this glow in the tail, is nothing but a spark of fire let drop by love himself on his torch. Madam, continued he, be so good as to squeeze it a little, just to see if it will wag its tail. *Tricolora*, curious of the experiment, pressed it between her fingers and thumb; but oh surprise! oh terror! she felt the blood spirt out, and that instant heard the voice of the Prince *Discreet*, who said,

Ah, *Tricolora*, I die by your hand :
 how much am I obliged to you ! —
 The Prince expired, the Princess
 fainted away, and the Inquisitor-
 General cried out, Huzza ! Huzza !
 Victory ! *Tricolora* has just killed her
 lover, so much the better for him,
 so much the better for her, so much
 the better for me.





C H A P. IX.

There never was a more foolish one.

O Racles, especially those made by an author, are always accomplished. *Tricolora* was, in course, forced to marry *Toadstool*, while her heart was yet full of *Discreet*, whom she had murdered, she did not herself well know how, nor I neither, or you would have had it more clearly explained. The King of Patagonia ordered the immediate celebration of the nuptials. There was a grand supper, at which there was more cramming than talking, and more talking than thinking. The fare was

delicate, the wit coarse. Dulness began to prevail, which was ever what diverted his Majesty the most. He observed with an air he took to be greatly clever that it was time to conduct the new-married couple to their apartment. The ceremony of which, as not very amusing, I shall spare you. The Prince looked foolish, *Tricolora* sad: the one from nature, the other occasionally. The fairy *Burning-spite* kept laughing and exhibiting the infernal grin of satisfied malice: the Inquisitor-General made a pathetic exhortation: but that is not what he will best acquit himself of, as the sequel will show.

As soon as the new-married couple were in the nuptial chamber: *Tricolora* stepped for a few instants into a closet,

closet, and appeared in a most elegant dishabil ; but what rendered her yet more charming and more desirable, was her confusion and blushes. On such an occasion, Modesty is ever a tributary to Voluptuousness.

Toadstool did not look quite so killing in his night-cap : and yet it was bordered with right Brussels-lace, and tied with flaming red ribbons ; not to mention his Pompadour-nightgown, and embroidered slippers. The King thought it now high time to leave them to themselves. He dismissed then the company, and, for his part, he withdrew, leaning upon two of his pages, after he had made himself and no-body else merry, with two or three coarse bawdy innuendos, which his Majesty was most graciously

ciously pleased to mean for double-refined wit.

Scarce had the company cleared the room before a voice was heard to pronounce these words: "He is not *there* yet."—Madam, said *Toadstool* allow me to give this voice the lie. *Tricolora* observed a modest silence, which authorized a husband's rights: he was proceeding to avail himself of it, when the Princess made a face, a complaint, and a motion. *Toadstool* full of respect, reined in his rapture, and asked what ailed her. My Lord, said she, something very extraordinary is the matter with me. Do you feel any pain in any part? pursued *Toadstool*. — My Lord, it is more embarrassing than painful. — Permit me, Madam, to see.—I dare not,

not, replied the Princess, if you knew but where it is you would not ask me. —Your saying so, answered *Toadstool*, points out to me where it is. At these words, he examined; but how great must be his astonishment at seeing a rose surrounded with thorns! — Ah, said he, Madam, what a beautiful rose is there! pray, is it a mark you was born with? —My Lord, said the Princess, I believe it is but just now come there. —That is very odd, said *Toadstool*; this must either be a trick plaid me, or meant me for a piece of gallantry. But I perceive some letters: they are perhaps a motto: allow me to use a light to read them: the character is very small: I fancy it is *Elzevir*.

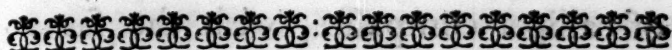
Toadstool went and brought a candle:

die: but he found a change of decoration. There were now neither rose nor thorns: in their place he saw two monstrous fingers that were making horns at him. *Toadstool* put himself into a violent passion; can you blame him? — Madam, cried he, you have got a gallant, and those are his fingers. — My lord, what do you mean? you use me ill. — Madam, be so good as to stand up, that I may see whether that will make no alteration. The Princess stood up, but the fingers were still there. *Toadstool* tried to think, but as he had been always an enemy to thinking, thinking was, at this juncture, an enemy to him, as indeed it generally is to those who have not got a habit of it. This will now appear. “ Princess, “ said he with an air of satisfaction; “ all

“ all this is nothing but a joke, and
 “ a cursed stupid one of the Fairy
 “ *Sly*, who wants to obstruct my joys
 “ by giving me umbrage about you.
 “ I remark however, that those two
 “ fingers cannot hinder me from giv-
 “ ing you proofs of my esteem. They
 “ will doubtless disappear the instant
 “ I shew I despise them.” He
 had then, as things appeared, a mis-
 placed desire, and indeed his wrong
 head never suggested to him any
 other: and that desire he was pro-
 ceeding to satisfy. But the two fin-
 gers just then became a pair of claws,
 and squeezed him unmercifully. He
 screamed out, and what redoubled
 his torments, was, that the Princess
 by an involuntary impulsion, at the
 same time he was thus held fast,
 walked or rather ran in a retrograde
 motion

motion round the room with as much speed, as the fleetest greyhound could do in its course forward.

“ Sdeath ! Madam, cried he out, you are mad : what do you mean ? stop, stop ! —— Indeed, my Lord, I cannot, answered she, continuing to draw him, in that manner, several turns round the room, without ceasing. —— Madam, said *Toadstool*, this is not to be born : you ruin me : I shall never be good for any thing as long as I live. At length, after a full quarter of an hour and more, *Tricolora* fell backward into an arm-chair, and *Toadstool* released with a jerk, rolled down upon the floor, quite senseless.



C H A P. X.

Way to break an incantment.

T*oadstool* recovered his senses, which was not indeed recovering much. Opening his eyes, he looked at the Princess, and said not quite foolishly to her; “Madam, I “had rather by much you had led “me by the nose..” The Princess, who was a little come to herself, had a great mind to laugh; however, she smothered a titter, and made no answer. — Are they there yet? pursued *Toadstool*. — I am afraid they are, said *Tricolora*. — We must see that, said the Prince. He found the fingers still

still there in the same form of a pair of calliper-compasses, with the same words, which he had not clearly made out before; *That is for you*, appeared in full legible characters. I am glad, said *Toadstool*, to find these damned impudent fingers there still, I have, in my pocket, a pair of scissors of my mother's giving me, which have the virtue of cutting any thing enchanted. The trial of them succeeded: he snipped the fingers smack-smooth: but the rose and the thorns took their place immediately with these words over them: *That is for him*. He performed the same operation upon this new enchantment: the two fingers re-appeared again, and always with this motto, *That is for you*.

Madam,

Madam, said the Prince, methinks that place of yours is never vacant.

—That is the fatality of it, which was always foretold me, answered *Tricolora*. But what I cannot conceive, said *Toadstool*, are the two Mottos: *That is for you: that is for him*. I believe there is a great deal of wit in them: though may I perish if I can think where it lies! — The first motto, answered the Princess, seems to me the least obscure: the device or emblem facilitates the understanding of it.

During this Discussion, the two Fairies *Burning spite* and *Sly* arrived. Son, said *Burning-spite*, I know you are under a perplexity, and I am sorry to say, it is not yet at an end. — Is that your way of helping me
out

out of it? replied *Toadstool*. But can you at least explain to me the meaning of this rose and its accompaniments? — It is my wedding-present, said the Fairy *Sly*. For a present of that kind, said *Toadstool*, it must be owned, it is not out of its place: and the two fingers? what may they mean? — The two fingers, pursued *Sly*, are a present from my son; he furnished them the Princess, with a charge to her, to bestow them on you. — Unhappily, said the Fairy *Burning-spite* they will remain there, till the natural consummation of the mystery they signify: at present they are rather prognostics than proofs: and yet they would disappear entirely, if they should not be able to hinder your being happy with the Princess. Make another trial then,

my

my dear son. No! hang me, cried *Toadstool*, if you catch me there again! — But hold! (said he upon second thoughts, and reflecting that it was not the horns that were now in sight, but the rose, and that that had never hurt him.) I will once more try to break this enchantment; so, Ladies, your absence will be the most agreeable.

And indeed, *Toadstool* full of fresh courage strove to get possession of the enchanted rose, without being scared at the thorns. Alas! the bold hero is the bubble of his courage. He found himself surrounded with ten thousand squibs, crackers, and china fireworks, which made a fine clatter round him, and singed him, like a fowl just laid down to roast.

G

He

He cried out lustily, Fire! Fire! The Princess, like a good-natured Princess as she was, wished there had been twenty buckets of water at hand for him.

There is some damned conjuration in all this, said the Prince *Toadstool*. Doubtless, answered the Princess, this is another honor done you by the Fairy *Sly*: we had no fireworks at the dessert; so that she perhaps reserved them for a better occasion: it must be owned this artificial fire is brought to a great perfection.

Just then the two Fairies re-entered the room, saying, Foh! what a smell of burning is here! "No wonder of that, said *Toadstool*. If the "King her father's artillery is but

" as well served as that of his daughter,
 " ter, I defy his places being taken.
 " But, I death, I never imagined before
 " fore now that a country-seat was
 " a castle.

There is, said the Fairy *Sly*, a plain
 easy method of removing this obstacle.
 You know very well that the Queen
 your mother-in-law has been metamorphosed
 into a tapestry-figure. Well! and what if I
 do know it, said *Toadstool*, what is that to me?
 I am very sensible of its being one of your
 frolics, but I cannot say I so much as
 guess at your drift in it. I am going,
 said *Sly* with a mighty soft tone, to inform
 you: it is but natural I should take my son's
 part; he was in love with the Princess. Yes!
 plague on him! I was witness enough of

that, in the decoy-scene of the two partridges : but, as good luck would have it, that little gentleman is dead. For that matter, continued the Fairy *Sly*, there are deaths and deaths : he was not perhaps so stone-dead, but that he might come to life again. But to the point. Seeing that my son was in love with the Princess, while the fates had decreed that it was you should be her husband, I sought, at least, to obstruct your enjoying your happiness, and for that purpose, I formed one enchantment of the Queen, and another of *Tricolora*. This last cannot be broke till the other shall have previously been so : so that you cannot make the barrier disappear, which deprives you of the Princess, till you shall have restored the Queen to her natural form.

I always, said *Toadstool*, thought you had a great deal of wit, but now I do not find you have common-sense. How the duce would you have me, who am no conjurer, manage for the Queen to cease being a tapestry-figure ?

Why, replied the Fairy, by using her as you was about doing the Princess her daughter.

Who I ? answered quickly the Prince, I ! have an affair with a Queen in hangings ? You do not know what you are saying.

Alas, son, said the Fairy *Burning-spice*, it is but too true : it is absolutely necessary that you do this piece of civility to the Queen of *Patagonia*,

or it must be somebody else that will dis-inchant the Princess. But indeed, said *Toadstool*, I swear to you upon my honor that this is among the things I cannot do. Well then! said the Fairy *Sly* very cool and easy, the Inquisitor-General must be sent for.





CH A P. XI.

More nonsense ; which will surprize nobody after what has gone before.

THE Inquisitor came in his habit of ceremony, and asked the ladies if there was any thing in his poor power for their service. It is but a trifle, said *Toadstool*: the point is for you to treat this Queen as you are used to treat the pretty women. He pointed at the same time to the Queen in the tapestry.

You are jesting with me, I fancy, said the Inquisitor.

And a very good jest too, replied *Toadstool*: the trial would only do you honor.

Ay! but, said the Inquisitor, I prefer a point of pleasure at any time to a point of honor. And I know too well the respect I owe you.

If that is all, said *Toadstool*, I heartily dispense you from it: I know very well that figure there in the hangings is my mother in law, and you may I promise you use her with as little respect as you please, without my having the least objection to it.

You do not understand me, said the Inquisitor; I shall not so much as try to disinchant the Queen; I will not take your work out of your hand:

hand : the dissolving that charm is your affair : mine to break that of the Princess. Allow me then to go quietly about the duty of my office.

I will see you hanged first, said the Prince, rather in a passion.

My Lord, continued the Fairy *Sly*, with the air of one ready to die of laughing, the fates have so decreed it, that these two enchantments are, by a strange capriciousness, so linked together, that in virtue of breaking the one, the other will be broke at the same time. There is none but you that can atchieve the dis-enchantment of the Queen ; and if you will not avail yourself of this honorable privilege, the honor of making the Princesses charm cease,

2

belongs

belongs of right to our Inquisitor.

I laugh at that, replied *Toadstool*, it is I that will have the rose.

My Lord, said the arch-conjurer: I fancy with submission, that you are mistaken. Be pleased to remember the words: *That is for him*.

Very well! said *Toadstool*, it is I who am that *him*.

My Lord, continued the Inquisitor. Once more, I am to tell you, your highness is mistaken: it is *you* that are *you*. The device of the fingers with their motto belong infallibly to *you*: but I am very sure the rose is for *me*.

At

At these words the Inquisitor made up directly towards the Princess, who was sitting on the bed, waiting modestly the result of all this. *Toadstool* was hurrying after, to seize and stop him, when the Inquisitor pronounced with the true tone of a magician. " *Invisible spirits, subjected to my power: make the prophane keep their distance, while I consummate the mystery in hand.*" That instant the apartment was seen separated into two by a curtain of the richest Genoa-velvet. *Toadstool* remained with the two fairies on the side in which was the Queen in the tapestry, and the Inquisitor on that where the bed was, and alone with the Princess.

His Royal Lowness the Prince *Toadstool* turned furious, in the choler-
 ic

leric stile of all little men : and wanted to creep under the curtain, than which however not a wall of adamant could have more effectually cut off all communication. Finding this, he cried out, you, son of fifty fathers, you !——stay but till I come to you.

Tricolora at this, on the other side, made her dulcet-voice be heard, saying, “ That must not be.”

This put the poor Prince in a greater rage yet : he foamed at the mouth, and cried out, Hold, you execrable spawn of a goat and a monkey :—I will be at you.

Not, said the Fairy *Sly*, before he will have been at the Princess.

Well !

Well ! said *Toadstool*, cooling a little, what somewhat comforts me is that, at least, he will prick himself. — Hush — Ladies, a moment's silence, pray. — Let us hear how he will come off : the thing deserves attention.

At the same time he clapped his ear close to the curtain, not expecting to hear the exclamation he did hear.

O what pleasure ! said the Inquisitor-General.

Pleasure ! Pleasure ! interrupted *Toadstool* : why the man must be mad. Let us hear a little more. And indeed the sort of sighs and murmurs he heard, convinced him but too well, that the rose had no thorns for his happy substitute.

The

The Princess giving at length a piercing cry, at which she fainted away, the charm was broke, the curtain dis-appeared, the Queen in the tapestry sprung round the neck of the Inquisitor-General : what obligation, said she, have I not to your Grace ! Then crossing the room to where *Toadstool* stood, looking more filly, even than usual, she addressed him in this manner.

Dear son-in-law, I congratulate you upon what is past. — Pray, says the Fairy *Sly*, will he receive visits or only cards upon the occasion ? — Come, my son, said the Fairy *Burning-spite*, you are not the only one. My Lord, said the Inquisitor-General, I owe your highness many thanks for this favor ; I will always be at
your

your devotion whenever you may please to want me in such exigencies: the service is its own reward.

Toadstool remained alone with the Princess, who was not yet come to herself. In order to bring her to life again, he was feeling her pulse. The Princess however probably imagined it was the Inquisitor-General, for she squeezed his hand, saying, oh! my sweet *So-much-the-better!*—and that moment she opened her eyes.

Is it you, my Lord? said she, now not half so well pleased as before: what are you doing there? What I can, Madam, said *Toadstool*. And note, he always spoke truth, for he had no imagination, and he was just then doing nothing to signify.

*Tri-
colora*

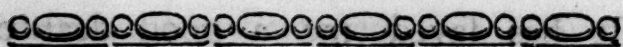
colora blushed, perhaps for him. The Prince was embarrassed, but he was still more curious. Ah ! ah ! said he, with an air of surprize, there are neither rose nor thorns left : well, after all : it must be confessed that man has excellent secrets. Probably, madam, it was that plucking of the rose that produced your pleasures. You have positively hit it, answered *Tricolora*. I readily believe it, said the Prince. I cannot say however but that it was a fine operation : but what has he done with all that was there ? My Lord, said the Princess, he took it away with him, to place in his closet of natural curiosities. Nay then I find, said the Prince, he had his reasons for telling me that he took the service itself for payment. And now to say the truth, I
am

am not sorry for what he has done.
 It has saved me a good deal of
 trouble (*yawns*) But I feel myself
 devilish sleepy. — The duce take
 the fool ! said *Tricolora*. And so say
 I, for this cursed silly story has made
 me sleepy too.



H

P. A. C.



C H A P. XII.

A touch at the Pathetic.

THE next morning was consecrated to the ceremonial of the toilette. After *Tricolora* had got over it; after having been pestered with the visits of the ladies of the court, who had on that occasion more than commonly thickened their paint and screwed up their faces; after having stood the silly double-entendres of the foolish lords in waiting, and of the rest of the flimzy courtiers, she thought she might devote the afternoon to reflections and repose.

But

But what has a Princess to think of? Of what she loves. Consequently the Prince *Discreet* acted a part in *Tricolora's* head. And as that head of hers necessarily held correspondences with every part of her body: so on particular occasions, such as very tender thoughts indeed, there are constantly spirits sent expressees to the principal places.

Tricolora, imagining she had killed her dear Prince, was weighing with herself the sad misfortune of having a lover who was dead, and a husband that might not be alive, without her being the more for that a widow. The profoundness of these meditations had held her till the decline of the day, when word was brought her that a young man de-

fired a moment's audience of her.

——A young man! said she with a voice quite that of a tender emotion, a young man, did you say!

——Yes, Madam, it was answered, he does not seem to be above twenty. Really, said she, his age disposes me much in his favor: let him come in, and do you hear? I shall not want candles yet a-while.

He was introduced into the apartment: but he was there taken with a faintness: he leaned against a scrutoire, and could only pronounce with a languishing voice, ah Princess! ah Princess! ——*Tricolora* was sadly disturbed. ——I must die, I find in good earnest: alas! you are then at last really Madam *Foadstool*!

Gracious

Gracious Powers! what do I hear?
 said *Tricolora*; what sound was that
 struck my ears! such was the voice,
 at expiring, of the poor glow-worm,
 when it thanked me so politely for
 having crushed it to death; the more
 I recollect, the surer I am. — Tell
 me; have you always had about you
 that pretious fiery glow?

Cruel stars! replied the Prince,
 since you are married, paled is every
 fire with me.

Alas! said *Tricolora*; this is past
 all doubt, the Prince *Discreet*; my
 Prince: yet it must be him: he is
 then still in life! : too
 surely, said the Prince, and to that
 life you might reconcile me, nay,

even make me in love with it; but I am afraid of your prejudices.

Be seated, my lord, said *Tricolora*, you may then talk more at your ease, more composed. I should not wish myself, said he composed, nor you neither. He drew however an elbow-chair, and *Tricolora* placed herself near him on one of those long low chairs so pure and convenient for Pleasure to give Virtue a fall, and lay her sprauling on her back. *Discreet* then resumed the conversation in an air at once serious and tender.

Do you know, said he, that I concern myself even for *Toadstool*, since he belongs to you?

I am

I am sensible of your generosity, replied the Princess, but, pray what is it you would do for him?

Take some of his business off his hands; answered *Discreet*.

The Princess, who had a great deal of penetration, saw well enough what the Prince drove at, and said smilingly; My Lord, I acknowledge your delicacy; but I know my duty.

Does he acquit himself of his, replied briskly *Discreet*.

The Princess said nothing to this question.

Ah! continues the Prince, I see *Toadstool* does as you say. What! is

it possible that he does not do justice to such charms?

As he ended this phrase, *Discreet* threw himself at the Princesses' feet. Prince, said she, get up, I intreat it of you. Your attitude, I own, shews respect, but I am told it is a very convenient one for a breach of it. Do not think it, replied *Discreet*, and know me better. My love is founded upon the most perfect esteem.

Alas! answered *Tricolora*, sighing, Love at beginning, protests friendship and lies: Love at an end, promises friendship and breaks his word. That, said *Discreet*, is a maxim which is rather upon the quaint, a little superfine or so. Are you then, after all, setting up for a wit? — Ah! *Tricolora*,

colora! Tricolora! mind nothing but your heart.

Probably he grew just then intolerably pressing, for the Princess said with some vivacity: indeed, my Lord, I shall ring for the servants. No servants, said the Prince, could serve you worse than to come to your bell.

No! no! said the Princess, it will not do. I still preserve in my heart a notion of virtue.

I have known the time, replied the Prince, that I might at least have claimed the second place there. As he pronounced these words, he gave her a look so expressive, and so fervent a squeeze of the hand, that

Tricolora

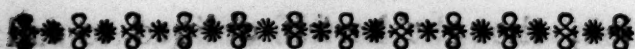
Tricolora was strangely moved, and could only defend herself in this manner. — Ah! Prince!—dear Prince! leave me, I beg it of you.

The Prince did not leave her, but gave her a kiss; one of those kisses that are in the stile of a preliminary to the execution of a treaty settled on both sides. But that assurance, which so often insures a victory, was here premature. Her royal highness happened to be just at that juncture in a fit of high heroics. This is too much, said the Princess, leave me, I charge you, this instant leave me, and never see my face again. The Prince stood petrified, and said, with a sigh, Madam, you shall be obeyed.

He had got into the antichamber,
when

when *Tricolora*, moved at his condition, thought herself obliged to call after him,—— Prince, when am I to see you again? —— This instant, replied the Prince, with the air of a man come to life again. But *Toad-stool* dropped in just in the nick, and *Discreet* went out, after having made him the most respectful bow. *Toad-stool* placed this most respectful bow to his own account. Poor man! But a husband often takes to himself the civilities that are shewn him on his wife's account; thus his vanity goes halves with her in his own deception.





C H A P. XIII.

A leading one.

TOadstool had returned the Prince his bow, with one after his fashion; or much in the manner of some purse-proud mony-grub of the city, afraid of not letting a Duke know he has more cash at command than his Grace.

That poor lad, said he to the Princess, looked rather sillyish: I will be hanged if you have not given him a cold reception: perhaps you have been in your airs with him. I should not however be displeased at
your

your doing the honors of my house, provided you do not do the pleasures of it. No, answered *Fricolora*, that is reserved for you alone.

While *Toadstool* was taking his wife so wisely to task, the Fairy *Sly* was rather more shrewdly lifting her son. She judged, by his eyes, that if he was not already in full possession of his happiness, he could not be far from it. But if his eyes, which there is no controlling, betrayed any thing, at least his tongue kept his secret. For *Discreet*, who had not been the bubble of the momentary feverity of the Princess, and knew perfectly well what to trust to, did not however behave like a coxcomb, and even of a denial make an indiscretion. No, he denied his having any hope, as one
would

would do that wanted in earnest to be believed, that is to say with that intrepid effrontery, which on those occasions is a virtue. He lied, in short, like a man of honor.

Well ! said the Fairy *Sly*, you will not tell me then ! but I will know how matters go with you there, in spite of your teeth : take but notice of that.

Now though she honored her son the more for his not humoring her curiosity, she could not prevail on her self to sacrifice it. In virtue then of her fairy-art, she clapped a spell on all the husbands ; the effect of which was to be, that they would have an attack of the cholic, every time there was a breach in their wives virtue. I fancy the reader is pretty

well prepared for this disorder becoming epidemical in that country.

As for *Tricolora*, had she known any thing of the spell, she would not have been in pain for *Toadstool*, nor suppose he could be affected by it, so thoroughly did she presume on her virtue, since her last repulse of the Prince. She was constantly contemplating and admiring herself for that same virtue, thanking herself every moment for the rigor she had shown him. Poor Princess! she did not know that to annex so mighty a merit to her having held out, implied a surprize at it; and that such a surprize was a beginning of weakness. True Virtue never congratulates itself upon any thing. A woman really indifferent resists and
scarce

scarce deigns to remember her resistance. A woman tenderly disposed, applauds herself for her refusals, and all in the act of applauding herself, recalls to mind the object : that object moves her, the melting mood ensues, and she concludes by surrendering. Generally speaking too much reflection upon resistance is a preparation for a defeat.

Tricolora however formed the project of a most glorious defence. We shall see the success of her resolution.

The next day, the Prince Discreet had the moment of *Toadstool's* going out watched, that he might determine the instant of his visit.

Princess, said he, as soon as he saw
 I her,

her, your eyes appear fatigued; a sign that of *Toadstool's* having passed a pleasant night.

Prince, answered she, you are got into a strain that, on my honor, does not become you: you take what you say for a clever freedom, and it is only a kind of obscure witticism.

The explanation of it would not however be very difficult, said the Prince.

I dispense you from it, replied quickly the Princess; but of what shall we talk?

Of you, said the Prince.

No! that is suspicious Of

I

Toad-

Toadstool then ? — No ! that would give me the vapors. — Of myself then, continued the Prince in a romantic tone. — Yet less, said *Tricolora* smartly, you would only speak of yourself by way of taking a circle to come to me. — We cannot, pursued *Discreet*, meet too soon, nor too close. — Ah ! I see you are going, said *Tricolora*, to draw my virtue out of its depth and drown it, if I do not take care of you. Let us then turn the discourse to some other matter. For example, I wish you would tell me why your Lady-mother changed you into a glow-worm. I never yet understood the reason of her preferring that form for you.

Yet it was a pretty plain one, answered the Prince. You may remember

member the time I was a cock, and even that it was yourself, Madam, who did me the honor of admitting me to the discharge of my office, in that shape. No more of that pray, said *Tricolora* blushing I obey you, Madam. But you must doubtless recall to mind that the Fairy *Burning-spite* was on the point of seizing me. To save me it was necessary I should disappear, and my mother could not contrive my escape better, than by giving me the figure of some little animal.—She judged very sensibly, said the Princess; the world is so pestered with great beasts, that are so stupid!

When I was, continued the Prince, in this insect-form, I found myself all of a size; but [as my love was

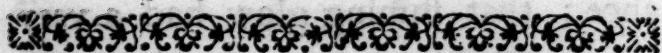
inseparable from me, all my spirits, all my sensations concentrating to a point, formed that sparkling glow which attracted your observation.

It is astonishing, said the Princess, what an expressiveness of countenance that gave you.—Of countenance! Madam, you surprize me: I had no face; how could I then have a countenance? and since there is nothing like plain truth, that sparkling glow of mine was all in the tail. Better any where, said *Tricolora*, than in the tongue only, as in one of your mere vocal performers, who with a head full of wind, and a heart like an ice-house, shall spit ye fire and flames, like a volcano. However, Prince, I repeat it to you, you had just then a very striking appearance:

ance : that shining glow had a very happy effect.

I think so indeed, replied the Prince *Discreet*, for I remember you took me kindly between your fingers, where I finished my glowworm-life, in the most pleasing manner imaginable. I assure you, said *Tricolora*, that accident made a great impression upon me, and I felt You did not know perhaps, interrupted *Discreet*, that in those instants I was returning to manhood again, under favor of your hand,





C H A P. XIV.

Ware the Cholic!

THE Princess remained some moments in meditation upon the last phrase of the Prince. Her eyes even glistened with tears. *Discreet*, absorbed in attention, and *Tricolora* in reflexion, both of them kept for some time a tender silence; a certain prognostic that of a great event. *Tricolora* broke it thus. Who could have imagined that that instant, which recovered to you your rights, should acquire to *Toadstool* those of being my husband! How could the fates decree it?

There is however, said the Prince, with an air of profound sagacity, a remedy for this disaster. — And what may that be? replied *Tricolora*.

Madam, answered the Prince, in the household of so great a Princess as you, there ought to be a multiplicity of offices. *Toadstool* makes a fine-cure of his: allow me to exercise it for him. Nothing is more common in the State than this way of having the greatest offices served by a secondary.

No! said *Tricolora*, it is not as a servant I would wish you; I propose making my friend of you. — How dear is that title to me! cried the Prince, glewing his lips to *Tricolora*'s hand. The Princess did not with-

draw it, and repeated with a faltering voice! yes! — yes! you shall be my friend.

The Prince, lifting up his head, perceived *Tricolora*'s cheeks animated with a deeper glow, and her looks more tender: How sweet to me, continued he, is the sentiment you promise me! how happy will it make me!

You think me then capable of friendship! said the Princess. Doubtless, answered *Discreet*, I even see in your eyes a great fund of friendship. With these words, he was gently leaning her down on the chair. What is it you want, said she Only a mark of friendship, answered *Discreet* You are not to be born

born you are so rude replied she in a tone of anger, which I cannot think was quite real, for *Toadstool*, who was just then at the king's levee, made at that very instant a wry face, which the Fairy *Sly* observed with joy. What ails you, said she to him : . Madam, it is a slight touch of the cholic. Ay! said the Fairy, look to yourself then, for those pains are sometime a warning of worse consequences. — But I return to *Tricolora*.

For a whole moment she had over-awed *Discreet*, but as he understood life, and knew *Tricolora* did not want for sense, he judged a good reason well seconded might not be amiss for the forwarding his point. Madam, said he, give me leave, in the quality
you

you allow me of your friend, at once to do yourself, me, and even the illustrious *Toadstool* justice. — What do you mean? — Nothing but what I say; yes, correct justice. You have bestowed on that poor Prince a power for very valuable purposes, but a power to the use of which he is unfortunately unequal. Ought he then to repine at a friend's filling a post, for the emptiness of which, through his natural incapacity, both himself and you are so highly to be pitied; and am not I a good Prince for the tender considerations which moves me to redress such a wrong? — Can you then deny your friend his right to such a friendly office? *Tricolora* cast down her eyes, blushed, and looked as if she was rummaging her head for an answer, and could not find it.

Ah!

Ah! continued the Prince; how am I to interpret this silence?

It was rather cruel, and perhaps impolitic in him, to ask her how he should interpret it, when her disorder so plainly pointed out to him the old construction of it; for the very question joined to certain freedoms that rather ruffled her drapery, roused her into something like a defence. Pray, said she, be quiet and have done, but she said this in so faltering a tone, into which she had however tried to put the utmost resoluteness, that he would have been the rudest man on earth if he had complied with her request. He did better and continued. This bred a tender debate, which was followed by a silence, interrupted, at length, by these

these words articulated in breaks —
Dis—creet! — I say, *Dis—creet!*
 *Dis——!* and just at that in-
 stant *Toadstool*, who was still in the
 royal apartment, rolled down on the
 floor in an agony of pain, crying
 out, oh the cholic! — the cursed
 cholic! ——— I am dying of the
 cholic!





C H A P. XV.

A remedy for the gripes.

PRobably this was the critical moment for the virtue of the ladies. For the royal apartment was now full of nothing but of poor husbands making wry faces and contortions. The pain of some was so violent, they could hardly keep their legs for it. The Queen who had been graciously pleased to give the King a fit of that same cholic, had made however such dispatch as to run to the apartments where they all were, and asked what was the matter?

The

The King, according to antient custom with him, did not know what to say; the Fairy *Burning-spite* looked confoundedly vexed, and the Fairy *Sly* stood bursting her sides with laughter.

This first attack ceased: the calm returned. Every cholic acknowledging such a cause admits of certain intermissions. The Inquisitor-general, spectator of so strange an event, most emphatically uttered his customary saw, *so much the better*. He was even embarking in a most edifying dissertation to prove it, when the King recollecting that it was the hour for holding the council, cut him short. His majesty would not for the world have missed that requisite of state, as no-one could serve the office of king with more form. Besides,

sides, there was just then an affair of the utmost importance on the carpet. The point was, to establish by law the monopoly of a gambling-table for the benefit of his dearly beloved subjects.

To the council then he went, attended by his son-in-law *Toadstool*. They sat : and the prime-minister had just intrepidly filled the ears and left the heads empty of the right-honorable personages of that board, by a pure high-sounding speech, in which there was infinite eloquence, and not a grain of common-sense, when the charm of the Fairy once more operated. *Toadstool* felt the effects of it with the greatest violence. Many of the privy-council, for the same reason, fell at the same time into the
same

same crisis. All the gravity of formal dulness was now disconcerted, and nothing was heard in the council-chamber but roaring out, in chorus, oh! this cursed cholic! and *Toad-stool*'s voice above all,

The King sent for the Inquisitor-general and the head-phisician. They entered the council-chamber preceded by the Queen and the two Fairies. His majesty made the report of the disorder, with which so many had been thus unaccountably seized. The learned doctor pretended the seat of it lay in the region of the liver; but the Fairy *Sly* set him right: saying, "*lower, doctor, lower.*" She then frankly owned, that this was a whim of hers. I laid, added she, that I would know precisely when the wives should

play their husbands tricks; by putting such a spell on the husbands as should give them the cholic every time that trick was plaid them. It is nothing but a holiday gambol of mine.

Toadstool could hardly speak for rage. He looked stedfastly at his mother *Burning-spite*, and after a horrid wry face from a sad twist of the guts, burst out into these words: — Oh! my dear mama, I am then a I am a But, madam, continued he addressing himself to the *Fairy Shy*: you must be the very damned spirit of mischief itself incarnate for such an idea to have come into your head. Sdeath! every time that I have a pain *here* (pointing to where he felt it) is that to be a certain proof that oh!

K

oh!

oh! proceed, said the Fairy,
 that your lady will not have
 a pain *there*.

At that instant *Toadstool* cut a face :
 the head-phisician said to him, feeling
 his pulse, my lord, you are biting
 your lips. Then, said the Inquisitor-
 general, the odds are that the Princess
 is making another use of hers.
 — Oh! said *Toadstool*, there is no
 joking with this but I know
 a never failing remedy I will go
 to my wife, I will lock her up, and
 as to that Prince of hers, I will
 Oh, cursed jade! said he rolling him-
 self on the floor, what torments!
 what do I not indure! oh! that in-
 fernal damned woman! Hush!
 softly, my son, said the Fairy *Burn-*
ing-spite, she is indeed all that, but
 you

you must not call her so, you must respect her sex. To my thinking, said the Queen, the Prince *Discreet* is just now taking a much better method of subduing a lady. *Toadstool* continued more and more convulsed: the sweat ran down his face with the agony; the head-physician pulled out his watch.—What is that for? heh! doctor, what are you about now? cried the poor *Toadstool* to him. My lord, answered the head-physician, I am seeing by my watch how long the operation will last.

There was no end of this fit. But, madam, said the patient to the Fairy *Sly*, at this rate the devil must be in your son. The devil is so good, said the Fairy primming up her mouth, as to possess often in this manner our

whole family. My son has the knack of making this sort of cholic last as long as it is agreeable : it is for that he is so much in fashion at court.

The King of *Patagonia* then put on his air of majesty, and thus expressed himself. After all, it would not be much amiss, to put an end to this whimsical enchantment.

That moment, the Inquisitor-general had the honor of the prophetic spirit moving him, and with staring wild eyes, uttered these oracular words : “ *These attacks of the cholic* “ *will not cease to come and go, till* “ *both the Queen and the Princess, or* “ *at least one of them, shall have re-* “ *covered her virginity.*” — Those cholics will not then cease in a hurry,

said the monarch. — I may then, said *Toadstool*, consider myself, from this moment, as a proper object for the hospital of incurables.

No, my son, my 'nown dear child, said the Fairy *Burning-spite*, it needs not be so neither. If that is all; if there is no more required for your cure, than either the Queen or the Princess being restored to their virginity, your case is not quite so desperate as you may imagine. Indeed mother, said *Toadstool*, if you can help a woman to that again, you must have an admirable talent for recovering of lost goods.

There is, in the gardens of the palace, said *Burning-spite*, a fountain which I myself have enchanted. The

waters of it have the vertue of restoring to real women what they have no longer, and to nominal maids what they ought to have : but I am to tell you one thing, that the Queen and Princeſs muſt return to their priſtine ſtate, on very different conditions, ſince it is written that the Queen muſt make a preſent of her bauble, after ſhe ſhall have got it again, to her liege-lord the King.

Thank you for my ſhare in this diſpoſition, ſaid the monarch ; I ſhall then, I find, begin at laſt to be of ſome conſequence. The condition indeed of tendering the firſt fruits of this inchantment to his majeſty, did not quite ſatisfy the Queen. She even dreaded its laying her under a neceſſity to continue a maid as long as ſhe lived.

As

As for you, my son, said the Fairy to *Toadstool*, if you have a mind not to have the cholic again, you must make over to another your right to the new treasure your wife is to enjoy. Why not? answered *Toadstool*, am not I used to it?



C H A P. XVI.

Pretty pictures!

Nothing more tempting nor more dangerous than untried remedies. The enchanted fountain ought to have been suspected, if but for its having been prescribed by a Fairy, who was never happy but when other people were not so. What her waters however promised was but too engaging. *Tricolora* bathed in them and did well: the Queen did so too, and did ill. The first recovered all the integrity of a maid of twelve years of age: but her mother fell into a snare of which the Fairy *Burning-spite* had

had taken special care not to forewarn her. This fountain had indeed the wonderful virtue which was attributed to it, but it was only for those who never had had but one gallant. I say nothing of a husband; he is not reckoned.

But it produced a quite another effect upon those who had had more than one intrigue in their lives: these waters never failed of making appear upon the body, the pictures of all the lovers any women had had that bathed in them, and for husbanding the ground, they were no bigger than such portraits in miniature as are made to be worn in a ring. The resemblances were striking. The Queen unhappily furnished a proof of this: for plunging confidently into the foun-

fountain, she no sooner emerged, than she found herself in the utmost confusion at seeing herself so sumptuously furnished. She knew all her friends at first sight. She used her utmost endeavours to get out the impression of them, as compleatly as it had been expunged from her heart, but the more dips she took, the more lively the colors grew. The proportions were finely kept, all the drawings were correct, the shades and lights well-disposed : in short, they were so many master-pieces of painting. The Queen, who did not pique herself on a taste for pictures, did not enter into all the merit of this new acquisition. She questioned her daughter, and was surprized to find she had neither the picture of the Prince nor of the Inquisitor-general ; but then the Prince

Prince told for no more than one gallant, which did not bring her within the case of the enchantment : for as to the other, she had only received him out of necessity, and there was therefore no trace of him. The charm expressed only the pictures of those who had been had out of taste.

The Queen was in this stew of perplexity, with her night gown loosely wrapped about her, when word was brought her the King was coming. And indeed the monarch was hastening to claim the privilege of handsel formally allotted him by the Fairy : but the Queen made a resistance, which for the first time in her life was not an acted one. A bashfulness proceeding more from a consciousness of her now visible spots, than
from

from any modesty, gave her a very excusable shiness. She recollected that her royal consort had always had more curiosity than activity, and, in her present circumstances, any thing of pryingness was what she had most to fear. She demurred then, — she stammered, — begged to be excused. The King, to whom all this squeamishness was the more inflammatory, as it was a perfect novelty in her to him, felt his desires redouble, and so much out-struggled her, that he forced her, at length, as it were, into her chamber.

She was no sooner there, than her fears became excessive. Indeed, my lord, said she, I should think that at our age it is not pretty What do you talk to me of age?

an-

answered the doughty monarch, who was growing most lovingly furious; the fountain has just rubbed out at least a score of your years. You appear, in my eyes, handsomer, younger, fresher than on the first day I married you: your spring is returned, and I feel it has brought back mine with it. Just that instant he was taken with such a fit of youthful vivacity, that on the strength of it he was proceeding to extremities which threatened the Queen with an imminent discovery. Repulsing him then, she said, Fy! my Lord at least consider the lights How! said the King, why this must be a marvellous fountain indeed! it gives even modesty; but I know you, and you will not like me the worse, the less measures I keep with it.

it. The Queen, in the flurry of her spirits, went into a fit, and the monarch cried out, bless me ! but what a sight of pictures there is ! hold, hold, methink I know all those figures. Sdeath ! there is half my household : let me see ! — ay ! there are the lords of the bedchamber ; — there is my Master of Horse — my equerries — my pages of honor ; there is Lord such an one ! there is Colonel what dee call-him : — Oh ! oh ! and there is my son-in-law that was to have been, the Prince *Discreet* — to the very life : well ! this is the most extraordinary thing I have ever seen since I was born.

The Queen coming to herself again, found the King busy with his magnifying-glass poring over each figure

figure to examine it the better. — Your majesty, said she, must certainly be surprized ! — Extremely, madam, you know I am a great delighter in pictures. But do you know that this collection is an admirable one ? You would make a great figure in the cabinet of a man of taste. I do not know whether you had not best be put up to show in the Hall of Arts and Sciences.

Sir, replied the Queen, you cannot but be sensible how dear my friends are to me : I desired a Fairy to procure me the pictures of all of them, but I could never have imagined she would place them there. — I think, said the King, it was very well managed by her for conveniency : they do not burthen the pocket. I am
however,

however, continued he, somewhat scandalized, first at not finding myself among all these little gentlemen, and then, at remarking their being all drawn for friends of not more than from eighteen to five and twenty years old at most. — My lord, answered the Queen, I am so fearful of losing my friends, that I take them as young as possible.

Well then! said the King, a thought just now comes into my head, to have prints taken of all these pictures. I should be curious to have a set of them graved, as has been done for the cartoons, or the Hampton-court Beauties. The Inquisitor-general has a good notion of these things; he draws very prettily himself; I will absolutely have him consulted,

C H A P.

CHAP. XVIII.

The best as being the last.

FOR all the Queen could say to the contrary, the Inquisitor-general made his appearance: the first glance of the eye struck him. Upon my honor, said he, here is a gallery of pictures in quire a new taste! But what I admire chiefly in this scheme is, that the pictures are so very portable; they are, what we the learned commonly call *vade-mecums*.

After all, said the King, this may produce a pretty set of prints.

L Upon

Upon which, the Inquisitor asked the Queen how she would have them executed, in graving, etching, or mezzo-tinto.

Good Mr. Inquisitor, said the Queen a little tartly, I wish you would meddle with your own affairs.

To all appearance, too many have meddled with yours, replied the Inquisitor : however I shall think my self very well employed in taking the drawings ; but, in conscience, I think the King ought not to be at the expence of the plates.

I understand you, said the King (see what it is to have wit!) those little friends in miniature there, have the air to me of having been so many
of

of my wife's gallants. I am apt to believe as much, answered the Inquisitor: this must be a piece of mischief of the Fairy *Burning-spite*, who has decided that every picture, which may have ceased to be in the Queen's heart, should be transferred to where you see them.

The Fairy *Burning-spite* was sent for, and in the mean time, the Inquisitor examined the pictures one by one. Some of them, said he, are very pretty, though but in crayons; very picturesc, upon my word! the attitudes they exhibit, would not be bad helps in a practical course of natural philosophy.

Burning-spite arrived. We are admiring the fine spot of work you have

made, said the King, and, I own, I think, the idea a very extraordinary one.

“ It has ever, said the Fairy, been
“ my opinion, that the woman who
“ admits of one gallant will admit of
“ two, and that a constant mistress
“ was to be ranked among other
“ purely imaginary beings, such as
“ griffins, red lions, blue boars, a
“ phenix, a patriot, a friend, and a
“ maid at twenty.”

“ But for my thorough satisfaction
“ I imagined the enchantment of the
“ fountain ; now if there is one sin-
“ gle woman to be found, who shall
“ not have a portrait in miniature on
“ her body, those of the Queen will
“ all disappear.”

That

That is an experiment, said the Queen, which may be made; and the more readily, for that almost all the ladies of the court have been just now bathing in that same fountain. The Inquisitor-General has nothing to do but to examine them. It is all in his department.

Madam, replied the Inquisitor, I embrace the office with zeal, and will execute it with pleasure; though considering the fund of secret anecdotes that must fall under my inspection, I cannot but think this occasion would be an invaluable one for a writer of secret history.

The ladies then of the court were, without being apprized of the cause, all commanded to repair to the closet

of the Inquisitor, where they were received, in the order they came, and separately inspected.

The Inquisitor acquitted himself of his employ with all possible politeness. He always began with this quaint phrase: "Please, madam, to let me see if you have not certain marks upon you; of which it is an affair of state for me to be satisfied." And satisfied he soon was that they all turned out *Piñs*: not one missed of having one or more pictures broke out upon her.

The Queen imagined that she should, among the coquettes, have the greatest chance of her charm being broke: but the Inquisitor observed that with them the only difference

ference was in the painting; their portraits being only in crayons, the colors of which were rather fading or unapt to stand, whereas those of the prudes were burnt in enamel.

After numbers had undergone the examination, there appeared at length to the summons a stately demure young widow, with an eternal frown upon her brow, which looked like a ready-made storm against any proposal of love. She had refused some very good matches with agreeable men, and had even renounced the religion of her country as not being gloomy or austere enough for such exalted purity as her's. She had long perfumed her whole neighbourhood with the sweet scent of her good name. She would not so much as

receive visits from near relations, if they were of the male kind. No-one would, at the tea-table affizes, fulminate more harsh sentences than she did against any culprits of her own sex; whom she always began by condemning without a hearing and without mercy, especially if they were young, handsome, and innocent. In short, there was not in the kingdom a more awful reputation for the most tremendous virtue.

She was however quite overwhelmed with a confusion in which modesty had not the least share, when the Inquisitor acquainted her with the design of her coming, concluding with these words, "Madam, your
 "virtue is on the point of receiving
 "the greatest lustre: allow me to
 "visit

“ visit you.” — Monstrous impudence! cried out the enraged saint It is my duty, madam I will give you a box on the ear and I will take it; but I must *see* for all that.

She was as good as her word; cuffing, kicking, scratching, biting, all came into play, and proved the importance she annexed to the discovery; but all this tooth-and-nail resistance could not hinder the ardent Inquisitor from overcoming it. She lay at length breathless at his feet, exposed and open to his survey: a circumstance which instead of giving him a stomach to her, only turned it. For behold! in fair display, a collection of originals indeed! There appeared in the first place a perking

perking curious piece of still-life ; a close counterfeit of nature ; not indeed the picture of a gallant, but of the representative of one, in those cases of deep distress when no human help is at hand ; there were besides portraits of more substantial paramours : one coachman, two stable-helpers, three postillions, four Irish chairmen, two negroes, a monkey, a lap-dog, and to crown all, the capital figure of one *Hirco*, a certain noted reformer of manners, brandishing in his hand a bundle of rods.

The Inquisitor was ready to split his sides with laughing at seeing *Hirco* amidst such an honorable groupe : but was not in the least surprized. He knew the Worthy. It had been but the day before, that he heard
him,

him, in a public place, inveigh with all the acrimony of mock-zeal, against the toleration of any filthy lascivious compositions, which he was piously for having burnt together with the writer. “What! said he, (while flaring grant himself from the lustful lash) “fire and faggot! were not the “times already precipitating fast enough into lewdness, that they needed *incentives!*”—Yes! this wretch, who had not a single virtue to intercede for him, laid out for the reputation of them all, on the credit of publicly railing at immorality, which no-one could more practise in private; and of which he had withall such false and narrow notions, as not to know there were many infinitely worse corruptions of the heart than that which a licentious gaiety did not even always imply.

imply. He would go to church one minute, and the next pick the pocket of even the poor, rob an hospital, or sneak into a brothel; then, not the most arrant hackney-drab cruising in the streets was ever readier for the prostitution of her body than he was for that of his soul. Vile hire or considerations of interest would at any time make a negro of him to any silly fellow of a minister, that should worse than spit in his face in some such speech as that, of which the construction, to be extremely fair, would be as follows.

“ You! Mr. What-dee-call-um,
 “ hearken to me, for I talk like an
 “ angel; and nobody has a better
 “ hand than myself, at selling a con-
 “ trary wind. I have said to myself

“ and others, that I was a great man :
 “ and every body has taken my word
 “ for it, for I gave them nothing
 “ else. Now, having the meanest
 “ opinion possible of you, of which I
 “ am hereby giving you the clearest
 “ proof, all that I modestly desire of
 “ you is, that you would fall down
 “ and worship me ; me, I say, who
 “ have not originally the least preten-
 “ tion to any superiority over you,
 “ but what my impudence in pre-
 “ tending to it has given me. As to
 “ my thrice-dear dear country, she
 “ shall have her ruin dog cheap from
 “ me : I want nothing for it but my
 “ bare wages, scarce even that : for
 “ money I value not ; a cow would
 “ keep me ; I do not care if the pa-
 “ rish buries me : but I love the
 “ flash of vanity, the smোক of vul-
 “ gar

“gar applause, and the appearance of
 “power. Thence my taste for prag-
 “matically interfering in affairs of
 “which I absolutely know nothing.
 “Do you be just as trust-worthy and
 “as steady as ——— myself. Be
 “implicitly subservient to me in all
 “the measures I have most graciously
 “adopted ; no matter what damna-
 “ble ones I once thought them. If
 “it is my royal will and pleasure to
 “change ; is not that reason enough
 “in all conscience for the whole
 “world to change too ? Every man
 “in *my* humor, is the word. Call
 “me then master, and, dee hear ?
 “I do not indeed foul my own sweet
 “and clean hands with the public
 “pelf ; but there is my brother-
 “ministers whom I heartily despise,
 “and who substantially return me
 “the

“ the compliment in making me
 “ their tool ; they will, that is to say,
 “ if they *please*, let you have half-
 “ a-crown to drink my health.”

O the great man ! ——— O the
 great man ! cries the virtuous *Hirco*.

The Inquisitor was however so sur-
 feit-sick of this last inspection, that
 he thought proper to put an end
 here to his visits.

The Prince *Toadstool*, being rid of
 his cholic, made himself very easy
 as to *Tricolora*'s disposing of the vir-
 gin-flower recovered to her by the
 enchanted fountain, to *Discreet*, who
 did not chuse to remember that the
 Inquisitor had had her first one.

Thus in the course of this miraculous history, all those oracles which had appeared so contradictory stood verified.

The Prince *Discreet* had had the Princess in quality of lover, and had not had her in that of a husband. So much the better. A lover however *innocently* killed, can scarce ever make a good husband, and not always a tolerable gallant. Premature liberties are dangerous. Young ladies should take care not to do, as is so frequently done by them, kill their lovers, whom they not only by this means lose for ever, but are often rewarded for their pains with such husbands as *Toadstool*, and what ought to hurt them worse yet, are sometimes reduced to take up with one for a gallant, they might have had upon more honorable terms.

Tricolora had however brought *Toad-stool* her virginity, such as it was, after having had seventeen children. It is true he could not take the benefit of the tender; so that he had had her, and had not had her. So much the better. At the worst she was still too good for him. There may be an intellectual as well as a corporal incapacity for enjoyment. Vertue and taste are essential to voluptuousness. Pleasure, in short, is something too sacred for debauchees or fools: the debauchee prophanes, the fool murders it.

After such portentous events, the two Fairies went to play their pranks in other courts; his most *Patagonian* Majesty continued to vegetate in his; and the Queen passed her

M

time

time in sticking herself as full of pictures as she could hold.

Now let us see if from this mouthful of fillabub a grain of solid aliment may be extracted by the powers of digestion.

It cannot signify a pin's point whether the original author has thought fit, under the shades of such a fairy-tale, as expresses all the unmeaning wildness of a China-picture, to couch certain real adventures of absurd personages in high-life. Even a Wapping-Atalantis could scarce be more insipid or less interesting than a Court-one of these days, and that for a very plain reason. In the lower forms of life yet undebauched by all the folly and nonsense of the higher, some

nature still remains, consequently some sentiment. This never goes without that simplicity to which true Taste gives, at most, but the trim of elegance and the polish of the graces. This sweet simplicity of nature is still the groundwork; nor can Taste exist without it, since it is the perennial spring from which it must draw all its sublime in all its objects, either in life or in writing.

Of this, however, the so ridiculously called Great have shewn themselves so miserably ignorant, that they seem to have taken it for an admirable improvement and distinction to invert the order of things, by kicking Nature out of doors, and delivering themselves wholly up to the false refinements of Art, which was never

designed by-Taste for any thing but Nature's very humble servant. Thus sentiment stands banished by them from Love, from every thing. But what has this senseless depravity produced? View the actual face of things, and deny it if you can; a destruction to the very foundations, of honor, worth, wit, taste, after which it will be but in course to add, of true pleasure; a chaos of infernal stupidity; a mass of rottenness, which must turn all concern or respect for themselves into such a joke, as must justly and necessarily sink them below the lowest and the vilest of the mob.

It matters not then as to them whether this tale is purely the work of imagination or not. But it is plain that the author had in view the dressing up Vice in a fool's coat, a

way of treating it, towards extirpation, not perhaps less effectual than those austerer preachments, which may be stiled the dry-shaving of sheer morality: morality which always does Vice infinitely too much honor, and much less harm than it is aware of, in painting it as an object rather of terror than of scorn and ridicule.

As to any ludicrous situations in the story, which may have required too strong or too gay a coloring, the author would not, I presume, pay his reader so wretched a compliment as to offer an apology. Nothing surely but the meanest and most contemptible of all understandings, with the most naturally vitious of all inclinations, could dread or affect to dread the corruption of morals, or any danger from Vice in so grotesc

a habit. Virtue, nobly secured in a just superiority of taste, sees nothing but what must rather confirm than alarm her for herself, in that monster, whether presented in the loathsome nakedness of rank obscenity, or less disgustfully and consequently more dangerously wrapped up: in which last form indeed, though it may serve even for a salutary medicine to the never more than a few people of sense; yet as it may also prove a poison to those classes too numerous not to be respected and even tenderly guarded, the young, the unexperienced, the ignorant, the weak and the foolish; any want of having considered enough the consequences to them, must render it justly execrable to none more than to whoever may have been unfortunate enough to lay the stumbling block or give the offence.

In

In the present however ready-cut-and-dry piece borrowed, as being the first at hand for the purpose, Nonsense never but a volunteer against itself, is pressed into the service of its capital enemy judgment; and may it happily for once, and contrary to its nature, have a little of that power to produce a good effect, of which it has had flagrantly so much to produce the worst !

If then in this decoy, formed as it is with the most innocent intention on the trite maxim, that "Extremes touch," any reader should find himself, by what carries the air of the lowest levity, betrayed unawares into a serious train of thinking; if that thinking produces even indignation at any one's amusing himself no better than with reading such *damned stuff*;

stuff; or what is worse yet, with writing it, in what times too ! times than which never any could more loudly proclaim the necessity of exploding the abandoned futility that so strongly marks them, and of restoring that once so justly admired solidity of the British Genius, which has seen itself so infamously supplanted by dulness, by folly, false wit, false taste, false interests, false politics, and what is there not false among us ? — I say, if I could catch any reader daring to think in this manner “ What “ then ? ” — I would — ay ! that I would, say — *So much the better for him.*



F I N I S.

